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DIRECTORATE OF  
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North Vietnam: Hanoi is threatening to break off the Paris talks.

The North Vietnamese have been testing the atmosphere in Paris since late January when they sent their high-level adviser, Le Duc Tho, back to the French capital, ostensibly to attend a French Communist Party congress. When this move failed to produce a US response, they apparently decided to increase the pressure by letting it be known they are on the verge of pulling out.

The North Vietnamese may not actually be prepared to carry out this threat. They can be expected, however, to engage in additional political maneuvering, perhaps by hinting at new flexibility in their negotiating demands, which would at least improve their intransigent image. The interview given by Foreign Minister Trinh to Associated Press correspondent Daniel DeLuce during the latter's visit to Hanoi may reflect such a maneuver. DeLuce's reporting highlights Hanoi's alleged willingness to consider a cease-fire, which could be based on positions put forth during the two-hour interview. The available text of the interview, however, fails to confirm any change in Hanoi's position. All of Trinh's responses to the series of questions submitted in advance reflected the standard Hanoi negotiating line.

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Spain: Madrid is contemplating a shift of emphasis in renegotiating the bases agreement with the US.

In discussing plans for Foreign Minister Lopez Bravo's prospective visit to Washington in mid-March, the Spanish ambassador in Washington said that the new Spanish Government "has completely abandoned the idea of granting bases for money." The new approach is based on the assumption that a security guarantee from the US alone and sufficient compensation for use of the bases will not be forthcoming. According to the ambassador, it also takes into account his impression that Washington sees some solution based on Spanish association with NATO or with some new western Mediterranean organization. The ambassador added that Madrid would expect some material quid pro quo as a supplementary part of the package, but that the emphasis was on a multilateral solution.

This change of emphasis is not likely to remove the difficulties in determining the amount of the US quid pro quo payment. The Spaniards need additional financing for their armed forces, and the foreign minister has given evidence of being tough and business-like. Another complication is the improbability of Spain's association with NATO as long as Franco is in power.

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